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TO RUEHGB/AMEMBASSY BAGHDAD PRIORITY 0883  
RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1015  
INFO RUCNRAQ/IRAQ COLLECTIVE  
RUEHIHL/REO HILLAH 1079

C O N F I D E N T I A L HILLAH 000001

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E.O. 12958: DECL: 1/8/2018  
TAGS: [ECON](#) [EAIR](#) [PREL](#) [IZ](#)  
SUBJECT: KARBALA SECURITY IMPROVING DESPITE SECURITY EQUIPMENT  
SHORTAGES

CLASSIFIED BY: Angus Simmons, Team Leader, PRT Najaf, DOS.  
REASON: 1.4 (a), (b), (d)

11. (U) This is a PRT Karbala cable.

12. (C) SUMMARY: On January 2, PRT Leader and PRT off met with IA Brigadier General Emad Majeed Soumadia'a and Iraqi IP BG Ra'ad, as well as School Superintendent Hamada in Brigadier General Soumadia'a's office in Karbala. The following topics were discussed: the improving Karbala security situation, how the Iraqi Army (IA) and Iraqi Police (IP) are addressing potential security concerns during upcoming Ashura-Arbaeen period, complaints that promised security equipment had not been delivered, and the beneficial security effects of the Green Belt Project. The refurbishment of Karbala Agriculture School was also discussed with school superintendent Hamada. END SUMMARY.

13. (C) BG Emad Soumadia'a said the Hajj was successful and that Karbala security has few problems. He added that he was concerned about security during the upcoming Ashura-Arbaeen because of the large numbers of pilgrims that will transit his area of operations in Karbala and South Babil Provinces. He said Major General Uthman will take control of the Operations Center (OC) in the Karbala area during the Ashura-Arbaeen period as he has done in the past. Comment: The previous OC commander, MG Hassan, has been transferred to head the IA 9th Division. End Comment. The BG said this is an excellent move to counter potential threats to religious pilgrims. BG also said that Karbala Governor Ghazali originally planned to be part of the meeting, but cancelled when the PRT flight was delayed, saying that the Governor would reschedule at another time. BG Ra'ad said he was also concerned about security during the upcoming pilgrimage event. He said a security plan was being finalized that included deployment of a sniper company, an 800 man infantry battalion, and a 200 man SWAT element. BG Ra'ad said he was concerned about resources he had been promised by 3ID that he had not received. He said radios, concrete barriers, EOD screening machines, and trucks promised had not yet been delivered. He noted he had only received 100 radios so far and that this was much less than his requirements. Comment: We understand a batch of EOD equipment will be delivered to the IP from the 3rd ID on January 14. End Comment. Commenting on the recent meeting between Governor Aqeel and three of Muqtada al-Sadr's lieutenants, BG Ra'ad noted that he had not been present, but understood that they had signed a nineteen-point security agreement with the Governor. However, Ra'ad characterized the main points of the agreement as follows: citizens' lives would be protected, property would be protected, no one was above the law, and weapons should only be in the hands of the state.

14. (C) The Team Leader asked both BG's if the proposed Karbala Green Belt project would help security in Karbala. They both said that any project that employs large numbers of people

enhances security and that unemployment is the root of most security problems in the province.

15. (C) As a quid pro quo for acquiring the land to expand the Husaniyah FOB, 3 ID agreed to renovate some structures on the vocational agricultural school property adjacent to the Husaniyah IA military base. Superintendent Hamada provided the Team Leader with a list of key items required for school refurbishment. The key items included lab equipment, planting devices, security fences, poultry hatchery refurbishment, and green house refurbishment. He said he could not provide a request for classroom refurbishment as that was being reviewed by the MOE. The Superintendent said the priority should be the security and training of additional staff members. Comment: The PRT will also assist the agricultural school with QRF projects and technical support. End Comment.

SIMMONS